

**Town Meeting Coordinating Committee
Minutes of Meeting of February 11, 2008**

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:07pm. Present were Otto Stein, Peggy Roberts, Judy Simpson, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Harry Brooks and Carol Gray. Phil Jackson was absent.

2. Meeting with ACTV Executive Director, Jim Lescault:

Jim said he had had a lot of complaints about audio visual at TM and they have done many changes to fix the problems. Improvements are being made.

ACTV has bid on a tricastor that is multiple units in one. It allows people at home to see what is happening as it happens. It will have the names below when people are speaking. The overall quality is much better. The signal is stronger. There are also new fiber optics for ACTV directly to Town Hall. This means files will be sent from ACTV to the Town website to be posted on the website. The goal is to have the programs available on the Town website the day after the event.

They have gotten positive feedback from Harrison Gregg about the changes. Jim hopes we will feel better about what we see.

ACTV will be putting speakers in the Town Room which should help with the acoustics in that room.

We asked Jim if ACTV would be available for April 10, Thurs. from 7:30pm-9pm for the CPAC/JCPC forum. He said it is available for that night though there is a Board meeting then. He will ask if the Board meeting can be changed.

Peggy brought up how it would be helpful to have rebroadcasts of Town Meeting and educational forums at a variety of times. Jim said he would work on that.

Regarding the bus tour, he clarified that ACTV will plan to leave the camera off while the bus is traveling from place to place to avoid of filming out the window while moving. Carol brought up the difficulty of parking at ACTV if TMCC were to host forums there. In terms of seating, Jim said ACTV can seat 50 people in folding chairs, plus another 10 or so in the adjoining conference room.

Jim has been meeting with the head of Special Collections at the Jones Library. The library has about 700 VHS tapes from Town programming. ACTV has bought a new DVD recorder and they are converting the last few years of Town Meeting to DVDs. They are developing more sophisticated search tools so that the archives can be more accessible. Jim is proposing ACTV buy a new DVD recorder at the library and they will start converting their own VHS tapes to DVDs. The Jones Library could convert their own tapes within about 7-8 months.

Jim is also exploring the media of storing digitally which might be an even longer-lasting method of storing, perhaps better than DVD's which some say have a lifespan of 50 years.

Judy brought up how it might be helpful to have a number of discs of the Warrant Review available for Town Meeting members to take home. Jim said this could be done for a minimal amount of money. He said it would be about \$2.50 or \$3 per disc if we wanted to do about 50. The alternative of having 10 or so at the library was discussed. This would probably be about \$3 each and we could figure out where to put them.

Otto sought clarification about how we would know what things ACTV is covering when we book them to do the AV for a room.

With the CPAC and JCPC forum, Jim asked that we provide ACTV with any materials that would be put on the overhead projector so they could be edited into the footage that is shown.

3. Minutes: On a motion by Judy, second by Harry, the minutes from the January 31st meeting were approved unanimously after minor edits.

4. Mailing to TM members of expiring terms: Judy mailed the postcards Feb. 1 to remind people that their terms are expiring.

5. Warrant Review: Peggy has sent emails to as board and committee chairs and support staff to those she had emails for reminding them that the warrant review is April 17. Harrison said he will be able to moderate for the warrant review. Peggy said probably all articles could be covered in the hour and a half meeting. Otto said it should be discussed what articles might be of interest to people. Carol suggested that all zoning articles be covered since they're complicated.

6. Information forum on CPAC and JCPC: Peggy had the idea of having two people present about the JCPC, one telling the history of the organization and the other talking about how it works. Carol suggested we have two talking about CPAC as well and will be calling the Boston CPA office to see if they have anyone who might come speak about what is happening with CPAC across the state. Judy talked to Kay Moran about the possibility of meeting with her to talk about history, but Kay said she's new enough that she's not the best person. She recommended Eva Schiffer as a person to talk to about the history.

7. Developing checklists for TM forum:
Otto already did a preliminary checklist for forums and sent it to Harry. Harry and Otto agreed to work on that and try to have a draft for next week.

8. Posting minutes and agendas:

ICT will set up a simple web page for us. The web page will be up this week and can be used to post minutes and agendas. Maria Racca at raccam@amherst.ma.gov in the IT department (mezzanine floor) will post them for us.

Alisa sent a suggestion that the budget priorities documents be posted on the Town website. Peggy said there was already a link posted.

9. Agenda for March 4 meeting:

The bus tour is April 13, Sunday, from 2-4pm. Mary will not be able to do the bus tour. Carol suggested we put together a subcommittee.

Suggestions: We proposed another meeting for Feb. 25 from 5-6:30pm just to deal with suggestions. Carol submitted a memo summarizing recommendations from the Suggestion Subcommittee.

10. Adjournment: Carol moved, Judy seconded, and the vote was unanimous to adjourn at 6:13pm.

Carol Gray, Secretary